Alliance for Coastal Technologies (ACT)
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences

The Alliance for Coastal Technologies (ACT) concept emerged in 1999 from discussions of the NOAA Coastal Services Center, the U.S. GOOS Steering Committee, and leaders in coastal resources management and marine technology development and manufacturing. There was a consensus that there was a genuine user demand for real-time data and comprehensive information products on coastal ocean conditions worldwide, but their development had been slow. Underscoring the urgent need to integrate new technologies into ocean observing systems, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy in its Final Report, "An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century," delivered to the President and Congress on September 20, 2004, stated**:**

> "The implementation of a sustained national Integrated Ocean Observation System (IOOS) is overdue and should begin immediately."

The vision of ACT is to facilitate the recommendation that:

> "the latest, innovative, and most effective technologies are continuously integrated into the national IOOS at all levels."

ACT is committed to overcome the challenges to make this vision a reality, providing technology users with the choices and certainty they require for making knowledgeable decisions, enhancing communications between technology stakeholders, and building and strengthening the enabling environment and thus the capacity for technology innovation and adoption.

ACT was launched in May 2001 with initial funding provided to the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory (CBL) by the NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC). During this first phase, ACT organized as a collaborative, networked laboratory, comprised of a Headquarters unit to coordinate all ACT activities, partner research institutions distributed throughout the country to conduct field and laboratory work and regional outreach activities, and mechanisms for stakeholder input and participation by the Stakeholder Council and Alliance Members. A pilot operational period followed, during which ACT established, documented, implemented, and assessed its governance structure, technical functions and tasks, and mechanisms for products and services delivery to ACT customers. With its organizational and operational structure in place, ACT began full implementation of all program activities in from May 2003 to April 2004, including the inaugural ACT technology verification begun in October 2003 on *in situ* dissolved oxygen sensors.